



Friday
March 18,
2011

Weekly Views

The first week of the National Institute of Correction's Offender Workforce Development Specialist training took place March 13-18 at the Correctional Training Center. 34 re-entry specialists from IDOC, Community Corrections, Bureau of Prisons, PEN Products and a variety of other post service providers completed part one of this challenging 180 hour curriculum. The training will continue with week two in late April and week three in June.

Staff from IDOC Central Office, the Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility (IREF), Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Workforce Development celebrated the grand opening of the new Indiana Veterans Educational and Transition Unit (INVET) located at IREF. Along with several other speakers, Commissioner Bruce Lemmon and former IDOC Chief of Staff Don Ronay praised the INVET residents for their dedication and service to the United States military, and for their commitment and innovations to enhance the program for future INVET residents.

A United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Apprenticeship graduation was held at Miami Correctional Facility. Over 90 offenders from PEN Products and the Miami Correctional Facility completed their apprenticeship requirements in nine registered apprenticeship trades. Guest speaker for the program was USDOL State Director John Delgado.

This was a busy week for participants in the Indiana Women's Prison ICAN program. The facility hosted ICAN Puppy Paw Painting. The pups let their paws do the walking and created more than 35 works of art with paint and canvases. The paintings will be auctioned off at the 2nd Annual Soup's On fundraiser at the WFYI building on March 26th. Also, Pet Pals TV on WNDY started filming the first two segments of what will be a continuing program called ICAN Train That! The show will feature IWP ICAN handlers teaching how to train basic commands. The segments will air during Pet Pals TV on Saturday mornings. Patty Spitler, the host of Pet Pals TV, came in to help the handlers get over their stage fright!

Executive staff from Westville Correctional Facility and Correctional Medical Services were guests at a judges' morning debriefing in LaPorte County. DOC staff, county judges, and representatives from LaPorte's Probation Department revisited the Department's Purposeful Incarceration philosophy. A successful Q & A session renewed the county's confidence in the IDOC's commitment to Purposeful Incarceration and introduced ideas for greater communication among the entities.

The Chain O' Lakes Correctional Facility held a Master Gardener's graduation and reception for 12 graduates and their families. The volunteers from the Noble County Master Gardener program provided certificates and inspiration into the offenders lives. The graduates are now preparing the garden for planting, with the goal of breaking last years total of 1100 pounds of produce given to a local food bank.

Madison Juvenile Correctional Facility presented their staff awards. Officer Chris Johns was selected as "March 2011 Employee of the Month," Sergeant Allen Coleman was selected as "January-March 2011 Supervisor of the Quarter," and Psych Tech Dottie Dirksen of CMS was selected as "January-March 2011 Contract Employee of the Quarter."

Participants from Northern Illinois University's ACA Student Chapter toured the Indiana State Prison to assist the group in their goal of understanding appreciation prisons outside of Illinois.

Legendary high school baseball coach, Ken Schreiber visited Camp Summit to speak with students about what it takes to be a winner. Mr. Schreiber told the students that the keys to winning in life, no matter what endeavor you choose, are attitude, commitment, persistence and learning from your mistakes. The visit is part of an on-going project to bring community leaders to Camp Summit to reinforce the principles underlying the mission of the boot camp.

Wabash Valley Correctional Facility staff welcomed back Major Dusty Russell following an extended medical leave. Major Russell received a special PLUS quilt requested by Lieutenant Victor Linneweber. The quilt signifies Major Russell's long road back to good health and his return to Wabash Valley. We are very thankful to have him back on the job!

Chain O' Lakes Correctional Facility (COL) held a Community Advisory Board Meeting with 24 community members present. This was the first meeting for Superintendent Kathy Griffin since arriving at COL. Kathy Griffin shared her background in corrections and her vision for Chain O' Lakes in the future. A positive open discussion and praise was given by the community members for all the support that is given to the community from the facility's work crews and the choir.

Ivy Tech Community College at the Correctional Industrial Facility had 11 offenders graduate and receive their GED.

MSNBC, in collaboration with Calamari Productions, completed taping of a special report about Youth Incarcerated as Adults at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility. The two hour special is due to air in November.

Miami Correctional Facility PLUS offenders were treated to a program featuring guest speaker Ken Johnson, Chaplain for the Indianapolis Colts. Also traveling with Johnson was his son KD Johnson, Christian Urban/Pop singer-songwriter-dancer-youth presenter, who also travels the country spreading the good word.